

A Delay Locking High Speed Clock Synchronization Method and Circuit

Background of the Invention

5 Field of the Invention

This invention relates to circuitry and methods for the synchronization and distribution of clock timing signals within integrated circuits and more particularly to clock timing signal distribution circuitry within integrated circuits such as synchronous dynamic random access memories (SDRAM) that provide an
10 internal clocking signal that has a period that is less than the skewing from the system clocking signals caused by the cumulative delay of the internal clock receiving and distribution circuitry.

Description of Related Art

15

As is well known in the art, an SDRAM has multiple cell arrays within multiple memory banks to retain digital data. The system Address Bus A_0, A_1, \dots, A_n is connected to the Address Buffer to receive the address of the location of the retained digital data within the multiple cell arrays of the multiple memory
20 banks. The Address Buffer transfers the requested address to the appropriate

cell array within a selected memory bank, where the row and column address decoders select the appropriate location of the digital data.

The chip select $\overline{\text{CS}}$, the row address strobe $\overline{\text{RAS}}$, column address
5 strobe $\overline{\text{CAS}}$, and the write enable $\overline{\text{WE}}$ signals form a command bus and are
received by the command decoder. These signals are decoded and transferred
to the control signal generator. The control signal generator generates and
transfers a set of control signals that determine the operation modes of the
selected cell array in the one memory bank. These modes are variations and
10 combinations of fetching or reading from, storing or writing to, or refreshing of
the digital data within the cell arrays of the memory banks.

The data control circuitry receives data from the data input/output buffers
which in turn are connected to a system data bus to receive and transmit the
15 digital data $\text{DQ}_0, \dots, \text{Dq}_x$ to and from the cell arrays within the memory banks.

The external system clock XCLK is transferred to the clock buffer. The
clock buffer then transfers the clock to the other operating units of the SDRAM.
The clock that controls the timings of the data control circuitry must be such that
20 the digital data $\text{DQ}_0, \dots, \text{Dq}_x$ is appropriately aligned with the external system
clock XCLK .

During periods of inactivity for an SDRAM, it is desirable that the SDRAM be deactivated. This is controlled by a clock enable signal **XCKE**.

The structure and timing of the clock distribution within the SDRAM is described in "A 2.5ns Clock Access 250Mhz, 256Mb SDRAM with Synchronous Mirror Delay" by T. Saeki et al, IEEE Journal of Solid State Circuits, Vol. 31 No. 11 Nov. 1996, pp. 1656-1664, and shown in Figs 1a and 1b. The external system clock **XCLK** is received by the input buffer **IBUF**. The input buffer **IBUF** has a delay time from the input of the external system clock **XCLK** to the output of the input buffer **IBUF** that is designated **d₁**. The output of the input buffer **IBUF** is the input to multiple internal buffers **INTBUF**. The internal buffers **INTBUF** then transfer the internal clock **ICLK** to the functional units within the SDRAM. The delay time for the internal buffer **INTBUF** is designated **d₂**.

The command signals chip select **\overline{CS}** , the row address strobe **\overline{RAS}** , column address/strobe **\overline{CAS}** , and the write enable **\overline{WE}** , as well as the address bus **A₀, A₁, ..., A_n** are gated into the SDRAM during the rise of the internal clock **ICLK** from a first logic level (0) to a second logic level (1). The internal clock **ICLK** is the timing signal that is used to synchronize the transfer of the digital data from the cell array in the memory banks to the data input/output buffers and to the data bus **DQ₀, ..., DQ_x**. The internal clock **ICLK** is delayed or skewed by the delay **d₁** of the input buffer **IBUF** plus the internal buffer **INTBUF**. Since the

ETRON99-006

timing of the functions of the SDRAM are determined by the internal clock **ICLK**, the access time T_{acc} of the fetching or reading of the digital data can be no smaller than the clock skew $d_1 + d_2$ plus the period of the internal clock **ICLK**.

This forces the minimum time that data can be cycled from the SDRAM to be two external system clock **XCLK** periods. As computer system clocks are approaching transfer rates of 100Mhz, it is desirable that the access time T_{acc} of an SDRAM to be brought to one cycle of the external system clock **XCLK**. This means that the clock skew $d_1 + d_2$ must be eliminated from the clock distribution system.

Phase Locked Loops (PLL) and Delay Locked Loops (DLL) are well known in the art for synchronizing two timing signals. In both cases, the time to achieve synchronization or lock may be on the order of 50 cycles or more. With such long lock times in SDRAM applications, the internal clocking signals **ICLK** can not be deactivated during the periods that the SDRAM is inactive. This increases the power dissipation of the SDRAM to undesirable levels.

The Clock Synchronization Delay (CSD) circuits are a class of synchronizing circuits that eliminates the clock skew $d_1 + d_2$ within two clock cycles. Two types of CSD's known in the art are the latched type CSD and the nonlatched synchronous mirror delay SMD.

Sub 927

Figs. 1a and 1b show a schematic diagram and a timing diagram for the general structure of a CSD circuit. The external system clock **XCLK** is received by the input buffer **IBUF**. The output **IBO** of the input buffer **IBUF** is delayed by the delay d_1 . The output **IBO** of the input buffer **IBUF** is the input to the delay monitor circuit **DMC**. The delay monitor circuit **DMC** provides an output that is a delayed input signal **IBO** by a fixed amount that is usually the sum of the delay d_1 of the input buffer **IBUF** and the delay d_2 of the internal buffer **INTBUF**.

The output of the delay monitor circuit **DMC** is the input of the forward delay array **FDA**. The forward delay array **FDA** comprises a number of delay elements that each delay the input of the forward delay array **FDA** by an increment of time τ_{df} . The output of each delay element of the forward delay array **FDA** is the input for each subsequent delay element and is also one of the multiple outputs of the forward delay array **FDA**.

The multiple outputs of the forward delay array **FDA** are inputs to the mirror control circuit **MCC**. The output **IBO** of the input buffer circuit **IBUF** is also provided to multiple inputs of the mirror control circuit **MCC**. The output **IBO** of the input buffer circuit **IBUF** is compared with each output of the forward delay array **FDA**. When one of the outputs of the forward delay array **FDA** is aligned with the $n+1$ pulse of the output **IBO** of the input buffer **IBUF**, the mirror control circuit transfers that one output to the backward delay array **BDA**. The mirror

control circuit **MCC** has multiple outputs to transfer any one of the inputs of the mirror control circuit **MCC** from the forward delay array **FDA** to the backward delay array **BDA**. The backward delay array **BDA** is comprised of multiple delay elements. Each delay element has a delay time τ_{dr} equal to the delay time of the forward delay array **FDA**.

The delayed clock pulse is delayed by a factor of:

$$\tau_{FDA} = \tau_{ck} - (d_1 + d_2)$$

where

τ_{ck} is the time of the period of the external clock.

τ_{FDA} is the time of the period of the external clock less the skew $d_1 + d_2$.

The delayed clock pulse is further delayed by the factor τ_{FDA} in the backward delay array **BDA**. Thus, the n th pulse output of the backward delay array **BDA** is delayed by a factor of

$$2d_1 + d_2 + 2(\tau_{ck} - d_1 + d_2)$$

This makes the n th pulse of the backward delay array **BDA** misaligned with the $n+2$ pulse of the external system clock **XCLK** by a factor of the delay d_2 of the internal buffer **INTBUF**.

5 The output of the backward delay array **BDA** is the input of the internal buffer **INTBUF**. The n th internal clock **ICLK** is now aligned with the system clock **XCLK**.

10 If the system clock **XCLK** is disabled by a clock enable **CLKE** and then re-enabled, it requires only two system clock cycles for the internal clock **ICLK** to align with the system clock **XCLK**. Thus, any data can be accessed within a single period τ_{ck} of the system clock **XCLK**.

15 The mirror control circuit **MCC** is of two types. The first type as described in "Capacitive Coupled Bus with Negative Delay Circuit for High Speed and Low Power (10GB/s <500mw) Synchronous DRAM) by T. Yamada et al, Digest of Papers for IEEE Symposium on VLSI Circuits, 1996, pp. 112-113, is a latch that fixes the delay segment of the forward delay element **FDA** selected to be transferred to the backward delay array **BDA**. Once the latch is set, it is only
20 reset during the inactivity time of the SDRAM. Upon reactivation of the SDRAM, the decision of the length of the delay necessary is recreated.

The second type of mirror control circuit **MCC** is the synchronous mirror delay. The mirror control circuit **MCC** is a pass gate that is activated when the output of the forward delay circuit **FDA** is aligned with the **n+1** pulse of the output **IBO** of the input buffer circuit **IBUF**. The synchronous mirror delay
5 chooses on each cycle of the system clock **XCLK**, which of the delay elements is satisfactory to align with the output **IBO** of the input buffer circuit **IBUF**.

As the system timing requirements of modern computers has increased, the frequency of the system clock **XCLK** has increased to a level such that
10 period τ_{ck} of the system clock **XCLK** may be greater than the clock skew $d_1 + d_2$. The internal clock can then no longer be guaranteed to be synchronized with the system clock **XCLK**.

U.S. Patent 5,742,194 (Saeki) describes an internal clock generator for a
15 SDRAM. The internal clock generator for the SDRAM provides a phase-advanced internal clock that is stably controlled with an asynchronous clock enabling signal. The asynchronous clock enabling signal provides the control without being detrimental to operation thus providing high-speed operation.

20 U. S. Patent 5,410,263 (Waizman) teaches an integrated circuit for synthesizing a 50% duty cycle internal clock that is synchronized with zero pulse difference with respect to an external reference clock having a frequency that is equal to, or is a sub-multiple of the synthesized internal Clock. The duty cycle of

ETRON99-006

the synthesized waveform is fixed and invariant with respect to the reference Clock duty cycle. Synchronization of the two clocks is achieved by a delay-line using a voltage controlled delay line with a nominal half period delay of the synthesized clock. The 50% duty cycle is achieved by a second control loop that has as its input both the reference and the inverted synthesized clock. This second loop drives the voltage controlled delay line with the synthesized internal clock signal. The integrated circuit clock synthesizer is intended to operate as an integral part of a microprocessor or a peripheral unit operating in a system having a common external reference clock.

U. S. Patent 5,923,613 (Tien et. al.) describes a multiple phase latched type synchronized clock circuit. The multiple phase latched type synchronized clock circuit creates a multiple phases of an internal clock signal in an integrated circuit that is synchronized with an external system clock signal is disclosed. A latched type clock synchronizer circuit has an input buffer circuit to receive the external input clock to create a first timing clock. The input buffer is connected to a delay monitor circuit to delay the first timing clock by a first delay factor to create a second timing clock. A delay measurement latch array is connected to the input buffer circuit and the delay monitor circuit to create a latched measurement signal, which indicates a period of time between a second pulse of the first timing clock and a first pulse of the second timing clock. A multiple delay array is connected to the input buffer to receive the first timing clock and creates multiple pluralities of incrementally delayed timing clocks. The multiple

pluralities of incrementally delay timing clocks and the latched measurement signal are the inputs to a plurality of phase generators that create a plurality of third timing clocks. Each of a plurality of internal buffers is connected to each of the phase generators to receive one of the third timing clocks. The third timing clock is shaped to create one of the multiple phases of the internal clocks which are then buffered, amplified and transmitted to the integrated circuit.

Summary Of The Invention

10 An object of this invention is to provide an internal clock circuit in an integrated circuit that creates an internal clock signal that is synchronized with from an external system clock signal.

15 Another object of this invention is to provide an internal clock circuit in an integrated circuit that creates an internal clock signal, where the period of an external system clock signal is less than the clock skew of the internal clock circuits.

20 To accomplish these and other objects, a clock synchronizer circuit provides an internal clock signal for an integrated circuit that is synchronized to an external system clock signal, such that the internal clock integrated is aligned

with and has minimal skew from the external system clock signal. The clock synchronizer circuit has a plurality of serially connected delaying circuits to receive the external system clock signal and delay the external system clock signal by an incremental period of delay. The incremental period of delay is equal to the period of the external system clock signal. The clock synchronizer circuit further has a plurality of frequency divider circuits. The first frequency divider circuit of the plurality of frequency divider circuits is connected to receive the external system clock signal and to divide a frequency of the external system clock signal by a dividing factor and each remaining frequency divider circuits is connected to an output of one of the serially connected delaying circuits to divide a delayed external system clock signal by the dividing factor providing a plurality of divided external system clock signals. The clock synchronizer circuit also contains a plurality of clock synchronization delay circuits. Each clock synchronization delay circuit is connected to one of the plurality of frequency divider circuits to synchronize each divided external system clock signal to the external system clock signal. A logical combining circuit is connected to each of the plurality of clock synchronization circuits to combine the synchronized, divided external system clock signal to form the internal clock signal.

The number of serially connected delaying circuits is one less than the dividing factor, while the number of frequency divider circuit is equal to the dividing factor.

Each clock synchronization delay circuit is a synchronous mirror delay circuit.

The synchronous mirror delay circuit has a buffer circuit connected to one of the frequency divider circuit to buffer, amplify and delay one of the delayed and divided external timing signals to create a first timing signal. A fixed delay circuit is connected to the buffer circuit to delay the first timing signal by a circuit delay factor that is a sum of a first delay factor and a second delay factor. The first delay factor is a delay time of the frequency divider circuit and the buffer circuit.

A forward delay circuit measures a difference time period. The difference time period is the circuit delay factor subtracted from the period of the delayed and divided external timing signal. A mirror delay circuit is connected to the forward delay circuit and the buffer circuit to delay the first timing signal by the difference time period to create a second timing signal. An internal buffer circuit is connected to the mirror delay circuit to amplify, delay the second timing signal to create the synchronized, divided external system clock signal whereby a delay time of the internal buffer circuit is the second delay factor.

In a second embodiment of a clock synchronizer circuit that provides an internal clock signal for an integrated circuit that is synchronized to an external system clock signal, such that the internal clock signal integrated is aligned with and has minimal skew from the external system clock signal has a single frequency divider circuit that receives the external system clock signal and divides its frequency by a dividing factor to form a divided external clock signal. The first delaying circuit of a plurality of serially connected delaying circuits is

connected to the frequency divider circuit to receive the divided external clock signal, and each of the remaining delaying circuits delays the delayed external clock signal by an incremental period of delay to form a plurality of delayed and divided external clock signals. The first clock synchronization delay circuit of a plurality of clock synchronization delay circuits is connected to frequency divider circuit and each remaining clock synchronization delay circuit is connected to one of the plurality of serially connected delaying circuits to synchronize each delayed and divided external clock signal to the external system clock signal. A logical combining circuit combines the synchronized, delayed and divided external clock signals to form the internal clock signal.

As in the first embodiment of the clock synchronizer circuit, the incremental period of delay is equal to a period of one cycle of the external system clock signal, and the number serially connected delaying circuit is one less than the dividing factor.

Each clock synchronization delay circuit is a synchronous mirror delay circuit. Each synchronous mirror delay circuit has a buffer circuit connected to one of the frequency divider circuit to buffer, amplify and delay one of the delayed and divided external timing signals to create a first timing signal. A fixed delay circuit is connected to the buffer circuit to delay the first timing signal by a circuit delay factor that is a sum of a first delay factor and a second delay factor. The first delay factor is a delay time of the frequency divider circuit and

the buffer circuit. A forward delay circuit measures a difference time period that is the circuit delay factor subtracted from the period of the delayed and divided external timing signal. The mirror delay circuit is connected to the forward delay circuit and the buffer circuit to delay the first timing signal by the difference time period to create each synchronized, delayed and divided external clock signal. An internal buffer circuit is connected to the logical combining means to amplify and delay the internal clock signal. The delay time of the internal buffer circuit and the logical combining means is the second delay factor.

The clock synchronizer circuit applies particularly to such integrated circuits as a synchronous dynamic random access memory (SDRAM). The internal clock controls the transfer of digital data to and from the SDRAM

When the dividing factor is set to two in a particular embodiment, the internal clock signal to be synchronized with the external system clock signal after four periods of the external system clock. Thus, the internal clock will in a general case synchronize within the number of cycles of the external system clock that is twice the dividing factor.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1a is a schematic diagram of a clock distribution circuit of the prior art

Figure 1b is timing diagram showing the effects of the clock skew of the clock distribution circuit of the prior art.

Figure 2a is a schematic diagram of a clock synchronous delay circuit of the prior art.

Figure 2b is a timing diagram of a clock synchronous delay circuit of the prior art.

Figure 3 is schematic diagram of a first embodiment of a clock synchronizer circuit of this invention.

Figure 4 is schematic diagram of a second embodiment of a clock synchronizer circuit of this invention.

Figure 5 is schematic diagram of an implementation of the second embodiment of a clock synchronizer circuit (Fig. 4) of this invention.

Figure 6 is a timing diagram of the process to perform a synchronization of an internal clock signal with an external clock signal of this invention, as implemented in the circuit of Fig. 5.

5

Detailed Description Of The Invention

Refer now to Fig. 3 for a description of the clock synchronization circuit of this invention. The external system clock signal is the input to a frequency divider **FDIV1**. The frequency divider **FDIV1** divides the frequency or multiplies the period τ_{ck} by a dividing factor **n** to create the submultiple clock **NCLK1**. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, the dividing factor **n** is two. The submultiple clock **NCLK1** is the input to the clock synchronous delay circuit **CSD1**. The submultiple clock **NCLK1** of the clock synchronous delay circuit **CSD1** is buffered, amplified, and delayed in the input buffer **IBUF** to create the output **IBO**. The output **IBO** of the input buffer **IBUF** is delayed by the delay factor **d₁** from the external system clock signal. The output **IBO** of the input buffer **IBUF** is the input to the delay monitor circuit **DMC**. The delay monitor circuit **DMC** provides an output that is a delayed input signal **IBO** by a fixed amount that is usually the sum of the delay factor **d₁** of the input buffer **IBUF** and the delay factor **d₂** of the internal buffer **INTBUF**.

The output of the delay monitor circuit **DMC** is the input of the forward delay array **FDA**. The forward delay array **FDA** comprises a number of delay elements that each delay the input of the forward delay array **FDA** by an increment of time τ_{df} . The output of each delay element of the forward delay array **FDA** is the input for each subsequent delay element and is also one of the multiple outputs of the forward delay array **FDA**.

The multiple outputs of the forward delay array **FDA** are inputs to the mirror control circuit **MCC**. The output **IBO** of the input buffer circuit **IBUF** is also provided to multiple inputs of the mirror control circuit **MCC**. The output **IBO** of the input buffer circuit **IBUF** is compared with each output of the forward delay array **FDA**. When one of the outputs of the forward delay array **FDA** is aligned with the $n+1$ pulse of the output **IBO** of the input buffer **IBUF**, the mirror control circuit transfers that one output to the backward delay array **BDA**. The mirror control circuit **MCC** has multiple outputs to transfer any one of the inputs of the mirror control circuit **MCC** from the forward delay array **FDA** to the backward delay array **BDA**. The backward delay array **BDA** is comprised of multiple delay elements. Each delay element has a delay time τ_{df} equal to the delay time of the forward delay array **FDA**.

The delayed clock pulse is delayed by a factor of:

$$\tau_{FDA} = \tau_{ck} - (d_1 + d_2)$$

where

τ_{ck} is the time of the period of the external clock **XCLK**.

5 τ_{FDA} is the time of the period of the external clock **XCLK** less the skew $d_1 + d_2$.

The delayed clock pulse is further delayed by the factor τ_{FDA} in the backward delay array **BDA**. Thus the m th pulse output of the backward delay array **BDA** is
10 delayed by a factor of

$$2d_1 + d_2 + 2(\tau_{ck} - (d_1 + d_2))$$

This makes the m th pulse of the backward delay array **BDA** misaligned with the
15 $n+4$ pulse of the external system clock **XCLK** by a factor of the delay d_2 of the internal buffer **INTBUF**.

The output of the backward delay array **BDA** is the input of the internal buffer **INTBUF**. The n th internal submultiple clock **ISCLK1** is now be aligned
20 with the system clock **XCLK**.

The system clock **XCLK** is also an input to the first delay circuit **DLY1** of a plurality of serially connected delaying circuits **DLY1**, **DLY2**, ..., **DLYn**. The system clock **XCLK** is delayed by an incremental delay period that is equal to the period τ_{ck} . The output of each of the serially connected delaying circuits

5 **DLY1**, **DLY2**, ..., **DLYn** is the input of one of the frequency dividers **FDIV2**, ..., **FDIVn-1**. Each frequency divider **FDIV2**, ..., **FDIVn-1** divides the frequency of the delayed system clock to create the submultiple clocks **NCLK2**, ..., **NCLKn**. Each of the submultiple clocks **NCLK2**, ..., **NCLKn** are the inputs to the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD2**, ..., **CSDn**.

10 Each of the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD2**, ..., **CSDn** is structured identically to the clock synchronous delay circuit **CSD1**. The output of each of the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1**, **CSD2**, ..., **CSDn** is one of the plurality of internal submultiple clocks **ISCLK1**, **ISCLK2**, ..., **ISCLKn**. The

15 plurality of internal submultiple clocks **ISCLK1**, **ISCLK2**, ..., **ISCLKn** represent the time position of one of the pulses of the internal clock **ICLK** exactly aligned with the system clock **XCLK** with minimum misalignment and skewing.

The plurality of internal submultiple clocks **ISCLK1**, **ISCLK2**, ..., **ISCLKn**

20 are then logically combined (logically **OR**'ed) in the combining circuit to form the internal clock **ICLK**. The internal clock **ICLK** is then distributed to the internal circuits of the integrated circuit.

The clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1**, **CSD2**, ..., **CSDn** may be implemented as synchronous mirror delay circuits as described above and in T. Saeki, et al.

5

A second embodiment of the clock synchronizer circuit of this invention is shown in Fig. 4. The system clock **XCLK** is the input to the frequency divider **FDIV**. The frequency divider **FDIV** divides the frequency of multiplies the period τ_{ck} by a dividing factor **n** to create a first submultiple clock **NCLK1**.

10

The first submultiple clock **NCLK1** is the input to the clock synchronous delay circuit **CSD1** and the first delaying circuit **DLY1** of the plurality of delaying circuits **DLY1**, **DLY2**, ..., **DLYn-1**. Each delaying circuit **DLY1**, **DLY2**, ..., **DLYn-1** delays the submultiple clock **NCLK1** by an incremental delay period that is equal to the period τ_{ck} of the system clock **XCLK** to form the plurality of delay submultiple clocks **NCLK1**, **NCLK2**, ..., **NCLKn**.

15

Each of the submultiple clocks **NCLK1**, **NCLK2**, ..., **NCLKn** is buffered, amplified, and delayed in the input buffer **IBUF** to create the output **IBO**. The output **IBO** of the input buffer **IBUF** is delayed by the delay factor **d₁** from the external system clock signal. The output **IBO** of the input buffer **IBUF** is the input to the delay monitor circuit **DMC**. The delay monitor circuit **DMC** provides

20

an output that is a delayed input signal **IBO** by a fixed amount that is usually the sum of the delay factor d_1 of the input buffer **IBUF** and the delay factor d_2 of the internal buffer **INTBUF**.

5 The output of the delay monitor circuit **DMC** is the input of the forward delay array **FDA**. The forward delay array **FDA** comprises a number of delay elements that each delay the input of the forward delay array **FDA** by an increment of time τ_{df} . The output of each delay element of the forward delay array **FDA** is the input for each subsequent delay element and is also one of the
10 multiple outputs of the forward delay array **FDA**.

The multiple outputs of the forward delay array **FDA** are inputs to the mirror control circuit **MCC**. The output **IBO** of the input buffer circuit **IBUF** is also provided to multiple inputs of the mirror control circuit **MCC**. The output **IBO** of
15 the input buffer circuit **IBUF** is compared with each output of the forward delay array **FDA**. When one of the outputs of the forward delay array **FDA** is aligned with the $n+1$ pulse of the output **IBO** of the input buffer **IBUF**, the mirror control circuit **MCC** transfers that one output to the backward delay array **BDA**. The mirror control circuit **MCC** has multiple outputs to transfer any one of the inputs
20 of the mirror control circuit **MCC** from the forward delay array **FDA** to the backward delay array **BDA**. The backward delay array **BDA** is comprised of

multiple delay elements. Each delay element has a delay time τ_{df} equal to the delay time of the forward delay array **FDA**.

The delayed clock pulse is delayed by a factor of:

$$\tau_{FDA} = \tau_{ck} - (d_1 + d_2)$$

where

τ_{ck} is the time of the period of the external clock **XCLK**.

τ_{FDA} is the time of the period of the external clock **XCLK** less the skew $d_1 + d_2$.

The delayed clock pulse is further delayed by the factor τ_{FDA} in the backward delay array **BDA**. Thus the m th pulse output of the backward delay array **BDA** is delayed by a factor of

$$2d_1 + d_2 + 2(\tau_{ck} - (d_1 + d_2))$$

This makes the m th pulse of the backward delay array **BDA** of each of the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1**, **CSD2**, ..., **CSDn** is misaligned with the $m+2n$ pulse of the external system clock **XCLK** by a factor of the delay d_2 of the internal buffer **INTBUF**.

The output of the backward delay array **BDA** is the input of the internal buffer **INTBUF**. The internal buffer **INTBUF** logically combines the outputs of each of the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1**, **CSD2**, ..., **CSDn**, buffers, and delays by the second factor of delay d_2 the combined outputs of the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1**, **CSD2**, ..., **CSDn** to form the internal that is now aligned with the system clock **XCLK**.

If the system clock **XCLK** is disabled by the clock enable **CLKE** of the SDRAM and then re-enabled and the dividing factor n is two, it requires four system clock cycles for the internal clock **ICLK** to align with the external system clock signal. Thus, any data can be accessed within two clock periods τ_{ck} of the external system clock signal **XCLK** once the internal clock **ICLK** is aligned with the external system clock signal **XCLK**.

As described above, the mirror control circuit **MCC** is of two types. The first type, as described in Yamada et al., is a latch that fixes the delay segment of the forward delay element **FDA** selected to be transferred to the backward delay array **BDA**. Once the latch is set it is only reset during the inactivity time of the SDRAM. Upon reactivation of the SDRAM, the decision of the length of the delay necessary is recreated.

The second type of mirror control circuit **MCC**, as described above, is the synchronous mirror delay. The mirror control circuit **MCC** is a pass gate that is activated when the output of the forward delay element **FDA** is aligned with the **n+1** pulse of the output **IBO** of the input buffer circuit **IBUF**. The synchronous mirror delay chooses, on each cycle of the external system clock signal **XCLK**, which of the delay elements is satisfactory to align with the output **IBO** of the input buffer circuit **IBUF**.

Refer now to Fig. 5 to discuss a representative implementation of the second embodiment of this invention. In this embodiment the dividing factor **n** is equal to two. The system clock **XCLK** is the input to the frequency divider **FDIV**. The frequency divider **FDIV** divides the frequency (multiplies the period τ_{ck}) of the system clock **XCLK** by a factor of two to create the first submultiple clock **NCLK1**. The first submultiple clock **NCLK1** is the input to the delay circuit. The delay circuit delays the first submultiple clock **NCLK1** by a delay factor that is equal to the period τ_{ck} of the system clock **XCLK** to create the second submultiple clock **NCLK2**. The first and second multiple clocks **NCLK1** and **NCLK2** are the inputs to the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2**.

The submultiple clocks **NCLK1**, and **NCLK2** are each buffered, amplified, and delayed in the input buffers **IBUF** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** to create the output **IBO1** and **IBO2**. The outputs **IBO1** and

97
Cent.

5 IBO2 of the input buffers **IBUF** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** are delayed by the delay factor d_1 respectively from submultiple clocks **NCLK1**, and **NCLK2**. The outputs **IBO1** and **IBO2** of the input buffers **IBUF** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** are the inputs to the delay monitor circuits **DMC** from submultiple clocks **NCLK1**, and **NCLK2**. The delay monitor circuits **DMC** from submultiple clocks **NCLK1**, and **NCLK2** each provide an output that is the delayed input signal **IBO1** and **IBO2** by a fixed amount that is usually the sum of the delay factor d_1 of the input buffers **IBUF** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** and the delay factor d_2 of the internal buffer **INTBUF**.

10

The output of each of the delay monitor circuits **DMC** of the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** are respectively the inputs of the forward delay arrays **FDA** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2**.

15 The forward delay arrays **FDA** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** each comprise a number of delay elements that each delay the input of each of the forward delay arrays **FDA** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** by an increment of time τ_{df} . The output of each delay element of each of the forward delay arrays **FDA** the clock synchronous delay circuits

20 **CSD1** and **CSD2** are the input for each subsequent delay element and is also one of the multiple outputs of each of the forward delay array **FDA** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2**.

The multiple outputs of each of the forward delay array **FDA** the clock
 synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** are inputs to each of the mirror
 control circuit **MCC** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2**. Each
 5 of the outputs **IBO1** and **IBO2** of the input buffer circuits **IBUF** the clock
 synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** are also provided to multiple inputs
 of each of the mirror control circuits **MCC** the clock synchronous delay circuits
CSD1 and **CSD2**. Each of the outputs **IBO1** and **IBO2** of the input buffer circuit
IBUF the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** are compared with
 10 each output of each of the forward delay arrays **FDA** the clock synchronous
 delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2**. When one of the outputs of each of the forward
 delay arrays **FDA** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** are
 aligned with the $n+1$ pulse of each of the outputs **IBO1** and **IBO2** of the input
 buffer **IBUF** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2**, each of the
 15 mirror control circuits **MCC** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and
CSD2 transfers that one output to the backward delay array **BDA** of each of the
 clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2**. Each of the mirror control
 circuits **MCC** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** has multiple
 outputs to transfer any one of the inputs of the mirror control circuit **MCC**
 20 respectively from the forward delay array **FDA** of each of the clock synchronous
 delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** to the backward delay array **BDA** of each of the
 clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2**. Each of the backward delay

arrays **BDA** of the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** are comprised of multiple delay elements. Each delay element has a delay time τ_{df} equal to the delay time of each of the forward delay arrays **FDA** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2**.

5

The delayed clock pulse is delayed by a factor of:

$$\tau_{FDA} = \tau_{ck} - (d_1 + d_2)$$

where

10

τ_{ck} is the time of the period of the external clock.

τ_{FDA} is the time of the period of the external clock less the skew $d_1 + d_2$.

15

The delayed clock pulse is further delayed by the factor τ_{FDA} in the backward delay array **BDA** of the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2**. Thus the m th pulse output of each of the backward delay arrays **BDA** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** is delayed by a factor of

20

$$2d_1 + d_2 + 2(\tau_{ck} - (d_1 + d_2))$$

This makes the m th pulse of each of the backward delay arrays **BDA** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** misaligned with the $n+4$ pulse of the external system clock **XCLK** by a factor of the delay d_2 of the internal buffer **INTBUF**.

5

The outputs of the backward delay arrays **BDA** the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1** and **CSD2** are the inputs of the internal buffer **INTBUF**. The internal buffer **INTBUF** logically combines the outputs of each of the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1**, and **CSD2** buffers, and delays by the second factor of delay d_2 the combined outputs of the clock synchronous delay circuits **CSD1**, **CSD2**, ..., **CSDn** to form the internal clock **ICLK** that is now aligned with the system clock **XCLK**. The internal clock **ICLK** is then transferred to the internal circuits of the integrated circuit to the timing of the integrated circuit. In the case of an SDRAM the internal clock **ICLK** controls the transfer of data to and from the SDRAM and within the SDRAM.

10

15

Refer now to Fig. 6 to review the method of generation of an internal clock **ICLK** from an external system clock signal **XCLK**. The frequency of the external system clock signal **XCLK** is divided by the dividing factor n to create a first timing signal **NCLK1** that has a period that is the period τ_{ck} of the external system clock signal **XCLK** multiplied by the dividing factor n . The first timing signal **NCLK1** is buffered and delayed by the first delay factor d_1 to generate the

20

first buffered timing signal **IBO1**. The first buffered timing signal **IBO1** is then further delayed by a second delay factor ($d_1 + d_2$) to generate the first fixed delay signal **DMC1**. The second delay factor ($d_1 + d_2$) is the sum of the first delay factor d_1 and a third delay factor d_2 . The third delay factor is the physical delay of the internal buffer **INTBUF** of Fig. 5. The fixed delay signal then provides a measurement of the difference between the period of the external system clock signal **XCLK** multiplied by the dividing factor n and the second delay factor ($d_1 + d_2$). That is

$$\tau_{FDA} = 2\tau_{ck} - (d_1 + d_2)$$

where

$2\tau_{ck}$ is the factor n multiplied by the time of the period τ_{ck} of the external clock **XCLK**.

τ_{FDA} is the time of the period of the external clock less the skew $d_1 + d_2$.

The first buffered timing signal **IBO1** is then delayed by the time of the difference measurement τ_{fda} to generate a first backward delay signal **BDA1**.

The first backward delay signal **BDA1** is then delayed by the third delay factor d_2 to generate a first set of alternating pulses (or odd numbered pulses) of the internal clock **ICLK**.

The first timing signal **NCLK1** is delayed by an incremental delay period to form a second timing signal **NCLK2**. The incremental delay period is the period τ_{ck} of the external system. The second timing signal **NCLK2** is buffered and delayed by the second delay factor d_1 to generate the second buffered timing signal **IBO2**. The second buffered timing signal **IBO2** is then further delayed by a second delay factor $(d_1 + d_2)$ to generate the second fixed delay signal **DMC2**. The second delay factor $(d_1 + d_2)$ is the sum of the second delay factor d_1 and a third delay factor d_2 . The third delay factor is the physical delay of the internal buffer **INTBUF** of Fig. 5. The fixed delay signal then provides a measurement of the difference between the period of the external system clock signal **XCLK** multiplied by the dividing factor n and the second delay factor $(d_1 + d_2)$. That is

$$\tau_{FDA} = 2\tau_{ck} - (d_1 + d_2)$$

where

$2\tau_{ck}$ is the factor n multiplied by the time of the period τ_{ck} of the external clock **XCLK**.

τ_{FDA} is the time of the period of the external clock less the skew $d_1 + d_2$.

The second buffered timing signal **IBO2** is then delayed by the time of the difference measurement τ_{fda} to generate a second backward delay signal **BDA2**. The second backward delay signal **BDA2** is then delayed by the third delay

factor d_2 to generate a second set of alternating pulses (or even numbered pulses) of the internal clock **ICLK**. The first and second set of alternating pulses (the even and odd number pulses) are logically combines (**OR**'ed) to form the internal clock **ICLK**. The internal clock **ICLK** is then transferred to the circuits of the integrated circuit. If the integrated circuit is an SDRAM, the internal clock **ICLK** is then aligned with the external system clock signal **XCLK** to facilitate transfer of data to and from the banks of arrays of memory cells of the SDRAM.

As is apparent from Fig. 6, if the value of the dividing factor n is two, the internal clock **ICLK** becomes synchronized with the external system clock **XCLK** in four cycles from the activation of the external system clock **XCLK**. Thus, a dividing factor n in the general case causes the internal clock **ICLK** to become synchronized with the external system clock **XCLK** within two times the dividing factor n cycles of the starting of the external system clock **XCLK**.

While this invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to the preferred embodiments thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes in form and details may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

The invention claimed is: